

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TRIPOL 00337 241320Z

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ACTION SS-25

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R 241100Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2086

C O N F I D E N T I A L TRIPOLI 0337

EXDIS

E.OVM QQYTWC GDS

TAGS: TECH, PARM, PFOR

SUBJECT: HEAD OF LIBYAN AEC ASKS AGAIN FOR USG DECISION ON
SALE OF TRIGA REACTOR AND FUEL

REF: TRIPOLI 200

1. ABDUL FATAH ASKANJI, DIRGEN OF LIBYAN AEC, ASKED TO SEE CHARGE MARCH 23. OE SHOWED LETTER DATED MARCH 11 FROM GENERAL ATOMIC IN WHICH COMPANY SAYS IT IS "STILL HOPEFUL" IT WILL BE ABLE TO GET USG APPROVAL TO EXPORT TRIGA III REACTOR, REFERS TO "DIALOGUE" IN PROGRESS BETWEEN USG AND LIBYA, AND TALKS OF SUBMITTING APPLICATION TO IAEA BOARD OF GOVERNORS IN JUNE. ASKANJI ASKED IF WE COULD CLARIFY STATUS OF MATTER. HE SAID HE WOULD NOT MOVE AHEAD ON DETAILS AND PREPARATIONS TO MEET IAEA REQUIREMENTS, AS GENERAL ATOMIC ADVISED, UNLESS THERE WAS SOME USG ASSURANCE REACTOR WOULD BE FORTHCOMING. HE WAS CONCERNED THAT LIBYA WOULD LOOK FOOLISH IF IT COMPLETED ALL IAEA PRELIMINARIES ONLY TO BE TURNED AWAY EMPTY HANDED AT THE END.

2. CHARGE PROMISED TO CONVEY HIS QUESTIONS TO WASHINGTON, BUT SAID AS FAR AS WE KNEW THERE HAD BEEN NO CHANGE IN SITUATION AS GENERAL ATOMIC LETTER IMPLIED. APPLICATION REMAINED UNDER STUDY.

3. ASKANJI SAID AGAIN THAT HIS TRAINING PROGRAM HAD BEEN "CRIPPLED" BY INABILITY TO GET TRIGA III REACTOR ON WHICH
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ALL HIS PLANNING HAD BEEN BASED. HE COMMENTED GENERALLY

THAT LIBYAN PROGRAM ENVISAGES SUBSTANTIAL
DEPENDENCE ON AMERICAN BUSINESS AND TECHNOLOGY.

4. HE DID NOT REFER TO HIS THREAT OF FEB 18 TO "GO ELSEWHERE"
UNLESS HE GOT FAVORABLE RESPONSE FROM US WITHIN FOUR WEEKS,
BUT HE DID MAKE POINT OF SAYING HE WOULD BE GOING TO
SOVIET UNION NEXT WEEK FOR SHORT VISIT. THERE WAS NO MFA
REP PRESENT AS AT FEB 18 MEETING.
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